

In the Specification

The specification has been amended at page 1 by adding a CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS paragraph as follows:

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is related to and claims benefit of priority to (i) European Patent Application No. 991125527.7, filed 04 July 1, 1999, 1999 and (ii) U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/142,534, filed July 7, 1999, entitled "AUTOPROTECTED OPTICAL COMMUNICATION RING NETWORK, NETWORK." and (iii) ~~European Patent Application No. 01-11594.8, filed 31 May 2000, all of which are incorporated herein by reference.~~

On Page 20, please replace the paragraph beginning at Line 12 with:

The transmitting transponders $(TxT_1(\lambda_x), TxT_1(\lambda_y))$ are optically coupled to the external ring 2 by means of OADM 4 and are adapted to feed signals at wavelengths λ_x and λ_y , to the external ring 2; the transmitting transponders $(TxT_2(\lambda_x), TxT_2(\lambda_y))$ are optically coupled to the internal ring 3 by means of OADM 5 and are adapted to feed signals at wavelengths λ_x and λ_y , to the internal ring 3.

On Page 20, please replace the paragraph beginning at Line 17 with:

Each transmitting transponder $(TxT_1(\lambda_x), TxT_1(\lambda_y))$, $(TxT_2(\lambda_x), TxT_2(\lambda_y))$ may be of a type that is adapted to receive an optical signal from switch unit 15, to convert the optical signal into electrical format for processing, and to output a new optical signal with a predetermined wavelength within the wavelength band. Transmitting transponders of this type can be implemented, for example, using Pirelli Optical Systems WCM/F-xxx (WaveMux6400 product family, xxx = output wavelength code) transponders. Alternatively, the transmitting transponders may be completely optical devices (for example based on SOAs, Semiconductor Optical Amplifiers) to process information associated with the optical signal; for example managing a pilot tone over-modulating the optical wavelength that carries the signal.